

Office of the Administrator

**Major Speeches Delivered by U.S. EPA Administrator
Christie Whitman**

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National Environmental Performance Track Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

**Remarks for Governor Christine Todd Whitman
Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
at the
National Environmental Performance Track Annual Meeting
Washington, D.C.
April 9, 2003**

Thank you Jessica (Furey) for that introduction. It is good to be with all of you again and to have the opportunity to recognize the outstanding environmental leadership that is underway through the National Environmental Performance Track program.

President Bush and I believe strongly that economic prosperity and environmental protection can and should go hand in hand, and all of you are helping us prove that point successfully.

As you know, the Performance Track program was established to recognize and reward companies with proven records of compliance, established public outreach efforts, and a commitment to improving environmental performance.

Since our meeting last year, the list of companies who have joined this voluntary program has grown from 250 to more than 300. I would like to welcome all of our new members and thank you for your commitment to this important effort.

Performance Track was designed to encourage companies to go beyond business as usual and look for new ways to improve environmental management. From bimonthly seminars to a database of environmental best practices to networking workshops, EPA has provided a wide range of tools

to help you meet your environmental goals.

EPA is also developing a variety of incentives to encourage participation and to stimulate strategic thinking about your operations and the environment. We are working to provide Performance Track members with administrative and regulatory benefits that can cut paperwork, increase flexibility, and enable a greater focus on environmental improvement.

In fact, I am pleased to announce additional steps we are already taking to create new incentives designed to spur on increased environmental efforts. The first involves EPA's work to develop more flexible approaches to air permitting, such as plantwide applicability limits, that have the potential to reduce emissions and increase efficiency.

As Performance Track members, your proven commitment to improved environmental performance puts you at the top of the list as we expand the use of these innovative permits.

We are also working to lift some of the routine compliance reporting burden you face. Given your strong environmental performance, we want to enable you to focus more on environmental innovation and less on routine reporting that was designed with lesser performers in mind.

Therefore, over the next year, we'll evaluate a set of additional reductions in reporting under the hazardous waste program that will apply specifically to Performance Track members.

I have also asked the Assistant Administrators for each of our major regulatory programs to recommend further incentives by the end of May. Our efforts in this area recognize that committed environmental leaders deserve recognition and rewards for going above and beyond the call of duty.

Indeed, your commitment to this program is already reaping impressive results for the environment. The report we are releasing today shows that improvements companies made over the first year of this program saved enough energy to power more than 10,000 homes for a year and cut hazardous waste by 700 tons.

In addition, one of our three year goals **B** reducing solid waste by 149,000 tons **B** was reached and exceeded in the first year. This is only the beginning, and I am confident that as we continue to move forward we will provide even greater benefits to the environment.

However, in order to do so, we depend upon those of you here in this room to

spread the word about Performance Track and encourage other facilities to join the effort.

In a moment, we will be awarding the Performance Track Outreach Award to seven members of the Performance Track Program who have done just that. By educating others about the benefits of the Performance Track Program, today's honorees have helped to motivate facilities to improve their performance and have helped us at EPA in our efforts to move this important program forward.

Every one of you here today is an integral part to the success of this program. By working together in partnership, we are helping break down the traditional barriers that have existed between industry and environmental efforts, and we are making great progress towards our shared goal of a healthy and safe environment for this and future generations.

Thank you.